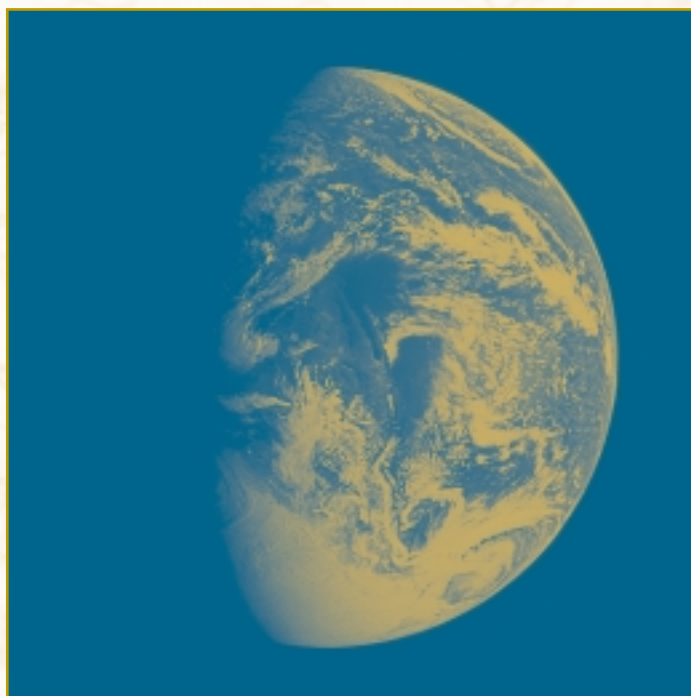


1970

30 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

2000

REMEMBER THE PAST

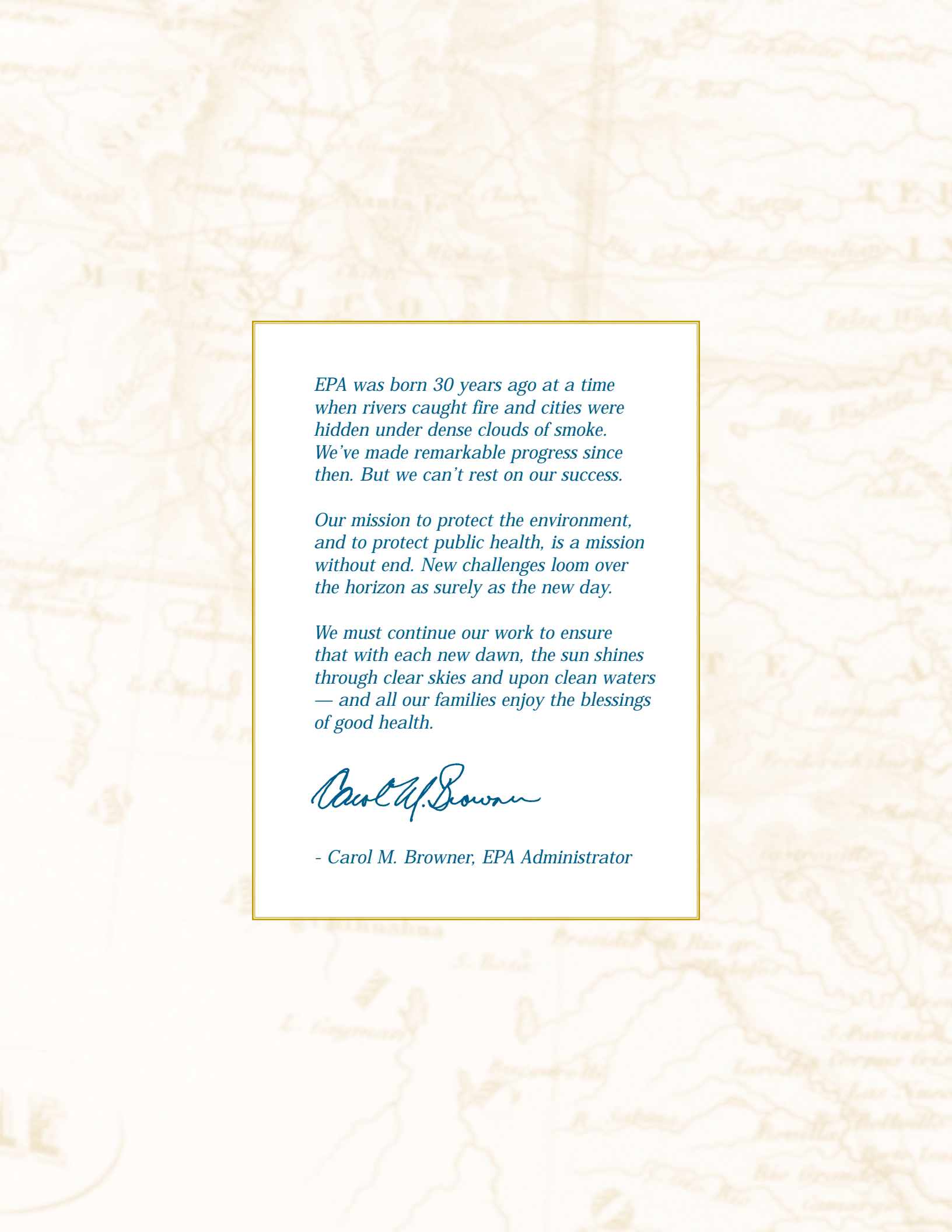


PROTECT THE FUTURE



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 6/Central-South States
EPA-906-R-00-001

ARKANSAS | LOUISIANA | NEW MEXICO | OKLAHOMA | TEXAS

A faint, sepia-toned map of the United States serves as the background for the entire page. The map shows state boundaries, major cities, and rivers. The text is contained within a white rectangular box with a thin gold border.

EPA was born 30 years ago at a time when rivers caught fire and cities were hidden under dense clouds of smoke. We've made remarkable progress since then. But we can't rest on our success.

Our mission to protect the environment, and to protect public health, is a mission without end. New challenges loom over the horizon as surely as the new day.

We must continue our work to ensure that with each new dawn, the sun shines through clear skies and upon clean waters — and all our families enjoy the blessings of good health.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, reading "Carol M. Browner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Carol M. Browner

- Carol M. Browner, EPA Administrator

GREGG A. COOKE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
U.S. EPA REGION 6

In December 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will celebrate its 30th anniversary. This is a time to look back with pride on our accomplishments — together, as a nation — in preserving and restoring our environment and protecting public health. It is also time to give thoughtful consideration to the work that remains before us in reaching our goals for a clean, healthy, sustainable environment that thrives within a vigorous economy.

In Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas — EPA's Central-South region — we have enjoyed the benefits of 30 years of protection and leadership in environmental challenges. We have proven that economic prosperity and environmental health protection go hand in hand.

Our region is unique and essential to our nation's economic prosperity. Nowhere else can you find such a diverse and productive industry makeup as we have along the lower Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico coastline.

We have come a long way in solving problems facing us. Tremendous challenges lie before us.

More toxic waste is produced from our factories and businesses in the Central-South region than anywhere in the country. Louisiana and Texas have the highest reported toxic releases in the country. Air pollution and ozone smog in some of our cities are among the highest in the nation. Approximately 5,000 accidental releases of oil and hazardous materials are reported every year, more than in any other area in the country.

The 2,000-mile border Texas and New Mexico share with Mexico is seeing the largest boom in population and industrialization in the country, yet living standards along the border are the lowest in the nation.

To meet these growing challenges, the Central-South region has been a leader in building consensus and collaboration. We are developing air quality with our local and state leaders to improve air quality for our children. Using Alternative Dispute Resolution, we have solved protracted problems quicker and cheaper without resorting to the courts. Formal alliances, like brownfields agreements with our Tribes, states and cities are transforming contaminated land into productive use without government mandates.

To have a healthy environment, we must continue to forge effective programs with states, Tribes, businesses, communities and citizens. Together, we can move beyond basic compliance with environmental laws — using innovation, flexibility and incentives — to foster a sustainable environment for today's children and tomorrow's leaders.